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# Sexually Transmitted Diseases :

## Candidiasis (can-did-ia-sis)

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This fact sheet provides basic information only. It must not take the place of medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. Always talk to a healthcare professional about any health concerns you have, and before you make any changes to your diet, lifestyle or treatment.

### What is it ?

Candidiasis or "yeast infection" is caused by a small fungus. Healthy women normally have small numbers of them in the vagina. Sometimes the numbers grow and cause such problems as vaginal itching, burning, a heavy, curdy, white discharge, and pain when having sex.

### How did I get it ?

Tight clothing, severe obesity, warm weather, stress, antibiotics, birth control pills, pregnancy, diabetes, and steroids can all cause increased numbers of yeast. The infection is not usually spread by sexual contact.

### What can it do to me ?

Candidiasis is not usually dangerous, but treatment can help the discomfort.

### How is it treated ?

With an antifungal cream, tablet or suppositories, available in pharmacies without prescription. Insert these into the vagina for the number of days stated on the product. Take the treatment even if you are having your period. Do not douche while you are taking the treatment.

### Does the treatment work ?

Not always. It may be necessary to find you why you have increased numbers of yeast in the vagina. You can talk with your doctor or clinic staff about ways to protect against this, such as wearing cotton underwear and loose clothing.

### Could I give it to other people ?

It is not usually spread to sex partners. They are treated only if they have a problem. Sometimes yeast infection can cause a painful swelling of the tip of the penis in men. This can be treated with an antifungal cream.

### When can I have sex again ?

As soon as the symptoms have gone away.

### Is follow-up important ?

See your doctor or clinic if the treatment does not work to make sure you don't have another type of infection.

### Remember :

Yeast is a nuisance infection. To avoid problems :

- Don't douche (especially with store preparations) unless your doctor or clinic asks you to and tells you what to use;

- Wipe from front to back after bowel movements. This avoids spreading germs from the anus to the vagina;
- Wear cotton underwear and loose clothing. This keeps the vaginal area dry and helps healing;
- Take treatment as directed until it is finished;
- Use condoms to lower the chance of infections in future.

**If your are still worried or have more questions, call your local health unit or STD clinic.**

## **Government of Ontario**

For information about health services and resources :

[www.health.gov.on.ca](http://www.health.gov.on.ca)

For consumer-friendly health tips and information :

[www.HealthyOntario.com](http://www.HealthyOntario.com)

INFOline: 1-877-234-4343;

TTY: 1-800-387-5559

Telehealth Ontario:

1-866-797-0000; TTY 1-866-797-0007

INFOline is open during business hours and can provide general information on healthcare.

Telehealth Ontario is a 24/7 service which uses nurse practitioners to answer your immediate health concerns.